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seems in itself little probable ; probabilities, however, are of small importance when opposed to the contrary and positive assertion of a respectable reporter. But the placing Lunjoo, as first visited by the river, seems to be an inaccuracy, and fixing Soogoo to the eastward of the former city, is a decided mistake, either of the original reporter or of my informant.

‘ The order of the progression of the river may be accounted for by a sweep ; but the relative situation of the two cities is an error, as, by observations made by the Jesuits, the portion of Kanchen between See Chew to the west, and Lanchen to the east, is ascertained.

‘ Had the reporter stated that, from Kamool, the river had retrograded into the Irtish, the account would have been less open to doubt ; but when it is made by him to reach Lanchen, it is much more likely that it should disembody into the Hoango. Having given my doubts, it is only candid to observe, that the Igours, from their original country of Turfan, migrate to the banks of the Irtish. And if the streams of their original country fall into the Irtish, this is easily conceivable.’

II.—*Account of Danish Discoveries on the East Coast of Greenland in 1829.*

THE question respecting the existence of Icelandic colonies on the East coast of Greenland, anterior to the fourteenth century, when they were supposed to have been lost, has long been one of some historical and geographical interest ; and although considered by the learned writer of the annexed letter to be now settled, appears still to admit of plausible reasoning on both sides. Of the particulars now given, as bearing on it, the greater number were communicated to the Royal Geographical Society of London, in a letter addressed by Captain Zahrtmann, Hydrographer Royal, Copenhagen, to Captain Beaufort, and read to the Society at its second meeting, in November last. But the following narrative has been preferred, being an official report sent, by order of the Prince of Denmark, to the Geographical Society of Paris, and somewhat more minute :—

‘ For some ages back the kings of Denmark have fitted out expeditions from time to time, with a view of re-discovering that part of Greenland which is said to have been formerly peopled by a colony from Iceland, but of which the trace was lost about the end of the fourteenth century. The persons charged with these expeditions have been as follows :—In the reign of Frederick II., Magnus Heinesen ; in the reign of Christian IV., Jens Munk, Godske, Lindenou, and Carsten Richardsen ; in the reign of

Frederick III., David Danell; in the reign of Frederick V., Peter Olsen Walloe; and in the reign of Christian VII., MM. Lowenorn, Egede, and Rothe. But all these attempts were fruitless, so far as concerned the discovery of Greenland to the east of Cape Farewell; and the only navigator who went so far was M. Valloe, who, by coasting, in the year 1752, arrived at Kangek, in latitude $60^{\circ} 35'$. The other expeditions never succeeded in landing, nor even approached nearer to the shore than the distance of four leagues. It was nearly at that distance that Captain Danell, in 1652, 3d of June, in latitude $64^{\circ} 50'$, discovered two islands, to which he gave the names of Hoidsolen (white sun), and Mastelost Skib (dismasted ship). The 6th of the same month he discovered five other islands situate more to the north.

‘ Under the reign of Frederick VI., distinguished by the encouragement of all the sciences, the search after this lost part of the monarchy was not likely to be forgotten, particularly as the expeditions fitted out for this purpose by the government had been always strongly seconded by the enthusiasm of the people. A commission was nominated to investigate all the difficulties of the enterprise, and the means by which they might be overcome; and this commission having reported, M. Graah (captain of a frigate), who already, during the years 1823 and 1824, had surveyed the west coast of Greenland, between $68^{\circ} 30'$ and 73° of latitude, was appointed to the command of an expedition destined to renew the attempt.

‘ In the spring of the year 1828, he repaired to Greenland with M. Vahl, naturalist, and was there joined by M. Mathiesen, who was to serve him as interpreter. In the course of this year (1828) and in the establishment of Julianshaab, he organized his expedition, causing to be constructed two konebaades (women’s canoes) and two cajacs, engaging two Greenland men and ten Greenland women, and collecting the provisions and articles of commerce which were likely to be required; and, having done this, he went to winter at Nenortalik, the establishment nearest to Cape Farewell, and situated at $60^{\circ} 7' 45''$ of north latitude, and $45^{\circ} 23'$ west of Greenwich.

‘ On the 20th of March, 1829, the expedition, consisting of four Europeans and twelve natives, embarked in two konebaades, and two cajacs, as already mentioned, and quitted Nenortalik. Instead of doubling the south promontory of Greenland, Kangek-kyrdlex (Statenbuk), situate on an island, they pushed on through the strait which separates that island from the continent, and in this way reached the eastern coast, where their progress was much retarded by masses of ice heaped up in a way that appeared extraordinary even to the Greenlanders. Being thus retarded, the consumption of European provisions was so considerable, compared with their progress, that M. Graah determined to send away the

Europeans, and the least brave of the Greenlanders ; and, accompanied by only two Greenland men and four Greenland women, to continue to explore the coast in one only of these frail boats. This separation was effected on the 23rd of June, in latitude $61^{\circ} 46' 40''$, and the project, which sufficiently proves the zeal and intrepidity of M. Graah, was crowned with the success which it deserved.

‘ On the 28th of July he had advanced as far as an island situate in latitude $65^{\circ} 18'$, and $38^{\circ} 27'$ west from Greenwich. He had to contend, in his progress, not only against the ice, which, besides incumbering the navigation and retarding the progress of the canoe, changed even the coast into a glacier, so that the shelter necessary for the men and for the canoe was only to be found at a very few places,—but also against the unwillingness of his crew to run the hazard of being forced to winter on this uninhabited part of the coast, where they would be in danger of famine.

‘ He persevered, however, against every difficulty ; but was at last stopped altogether by an insurmountable barrier of ice, and forced to return, after having vainly waited till the end of August, expecting a favourable change. On the 1st of October, he arrived at Nugarbik, latitude $63^{\circ} 22'$, where he took up his winter quarters, and sent home a detail of his enterprise, dated April 2, 1830, entrusting the document to the care of a Greenland, who carried it to the establishment of Julianshaab, from which it was transmitted to Copenhagen. He announces in it his intention to quit Nugarbik on the 3d, to push to the north as far as his limited means would allow, and to return to Nenortalik in the autumn ; and it may be hoped that he has since completed his perilous enterprise.

‘ As for the principal object of the expedition, however, it appears to be already accomplished ; for having advanced beyond the latitude ascribed to this ancient colony, without discovering the least trace of it, or the most insignificant remains, even in places which must necessarily have been occupied, if the inhabitants had ever possessed fixed habitations,—having found no tradition or trace of the religion, language, or manners of that Christian colony among the natives of the country, it appears evident to M. Graah, that this Icelandic colony could not have been to the east of Statenhuk, but on the south-west part of the present Greenland, near the site of the establishment of Julianshaab, agreeably to the opinion which was expressed forty years ago by M. Eggers, in a work crowned by the Royal Academy of Sciences at Copenhagen.

‘ A chart, transmitted by M. Graah, differs materially from those that have been constructed after the old description of the bishopric of Greenland, by Ivar Bardsen ; but it confirms the

discoveries of Captain Danell, for not only does it show the islands of Hoidsolen and Mastelost Skib, but M. Graah has even discovered from the point whence he returned, three of the five islands of Danell. The only circumstance which appears to favour the old opinion respecting the situation of that colony, is the physical character of the men whom M. Graah has found there. They have little analogy with the Esquimaux, and resemble, on the contrary, the Scandinavians of Europe. They have neither the flat heads, short broad persons, nor the flabby fatness of the Esquimaux, but are, for the most part, above the middle stature, having the European form of head and expression of countenance. Their persons are rather meagre, but nervous, and finely formed, without any appearance of weakness ; and they are more active and robust than the inhabitants of the west coast. The colour of skin of the women and children is quite as clear and pure as that of Europeans, and they have often brown hair, which is never seen on the other inhabitants of Greenland. Some of the men allow their mustachios to grow, others tattoo their arms, and all the women have their arms, hands, and chin tattooed—an operation which they execute themselves. Exposed to the greatest physical suffering, and very often to famine, it is seldom that they live beyond the age of fifty ; it is also alleged that the population is decreasing ; and between the latitudes of 60° and 65°, M. Graah found only about five or six hundred inhabitants. The population appeared to have decreased on the south side of the coast, some of the inhabitants having emigrated to a new mission of Moravian Brothers, which has lately established itself at Fredrichsthal, near to Cape Statenhuk. The missionaries are accustomed to collect the natives around them, and this facilitates, doubtless, their instruction and conversion ; while, on the other hand, it increases the ravages of famine when the harvest fails. In the establishments of the Danish missionaries, they prefer to allow the natives to pursue their wandering life, but without losing sight of the object of the mission.

‘ With respect to their religious opinions, it is a subject on which M. Graah does not enter into any detail, on account of his imperfect knowledge of their language. It appears that, like the other Greenlanders, they adore two beings, a good and an evil deity. Like them, too, they have sorcerers (*angekoks*), but their influence does not appear to be so great, and is probably diminishing still more, because M. Graah observed, that the young people amused themselves with laughing at them. In their moral character they seem very estimable ; and the reported good-nature of the husbands, the submission of their wives, the obedience of the children, and the mutual affection and confidence of the whole community, make it difficult to remember that they are pagans. It was the good faith, the hospitality, the kind and generous dispo-

sitions of these children of nature, that enabled M. Graah, in his isolated situation, to overcome the obstacles by which he was surrounded. During thirteen months he lost only a hatchet, and this he believed that he had forgotten somewhere; and his letters and journals have been transmitted to us by a Greenlander, who carried them from Nugarbik to Nenalalek. Polygamy is not common among them; they do not change their wives, and their morals appear to be irreproachable. The married people neither fight nor dispute with one another, and no appearance of ill-humour is to be seen among them.

‘Although M. Graah possessed articles that greatly delighted them, no Greenlander, not even one of the children, begged for anything, unless when service had been rendered; for on these occasions they always demanded a gratification, but were generally satisfied with a portion of tobacco. Their chief luxuries are tobacco, coffee, and eau de vie.

‘All this coast appears to be still colder, more barren and miserable than the west coast. It may be said to consist of one uninterrupted glacier (*gisbrae*), exhibiting only a few patches of vegetation, generally on the banks of the rivers—and elsewhere, often advancing far into the sea, and forming promontories of ice, which are passed with so much the more danger, that they frequently fall in avalanches (*koeloe*).

‘During the whole summer of 1829, there was not one day which could be called warm; and before the 14th of June, the Centigrade thermometer had never risen above 12°. During the winter of 1828-9, however, the cold never exceeded -17° or 18°; and the south-west winds sometimes caused the temperature to rise suddenly to +13°.

‘At Ekolumius, latitude 63° 30', the vegetation appeared to M. Graah to be superior to that of any other part of the coast, even of Julianshaab, which is reputed to be the most favoured part of the west coast. This vegetation, however, appears to consist only in a fine grass, which withers quickly when exposed to the warmth of the sun, and in some anti-scorbutic plants, as sorrel and scurvy-grass, with one or two kinds of flowers, and low bushes of willow and birch, of which the maximum growth is two feet.

‘The food of the natives is principally the dried flesh of the seal, with a little game and fish. M. Graah makes mention of bears, hares, birds, and salmon; but he says that, even at the latitude of 63° 26', rein-deer and hares are known only by name.

‘In laying down the plan of the coast, M. Graah derived no assistance from his chronometers, because one of them stopped at Nenortalik, and the other at the beginning of the voyage, which was of a nature to expose these delicate instruments to too much casualty.

‘He made many observations of latitude and some of lunar dis-

tances, as well as of the declination of the needle ; and in the latitude of $63^{\circ} 11' 12''$, he found an excellent harbour, Amitoarsuk, which he has surveyed, but the details and many of the results have not arrived, the extract from his journals containing only a few latitudes and a single longitude taken by lunar distances. At the bottom of a bay, latitude $61^{\circ} 10'$, he found a three-pound iron gun, of what country could not be ascertained, but which seems to date from the end of the seventeenth century, and has probably belonged to a whale-ship that was lost. At $63^{\circ} 36'$ of latitude, the natives pretend to have seen, about the end of July 1829, a ship in the open sea, *at a very great distance* ; it would be interesting to know if, at that time, any whaler attempted to pass between Iceland and Greenland, and in what state it found the ice. The last inhabitants whom M. Graah found on that coast informed him, that he would find others still farther north, and but a little way off. It is to be hoped, therefore, that he has since reached them, and that he will in this way procure us further particulars regarding this coast, having been so successful in his first attempt.'

No information of Captain Graah's further progress has as yet, however (Sept. 1831), been received. Meanwhile it may be added, that if he succeed in gaining latitude 69° N., this whole coast will have been recently examined as far as 75° , Captain Scoresby's survey of it, in 1822, having ranged between these parallels.

III.—*Account of Operations to find Water in the Desert between Cairo and Suez.* Extracted from the Malta Government Gazette. Dated 16th March, 1831.

'WE have been favoured with an interesting account of some successful attempts made with great energy and perseverance by Mr. Samuel Briggs, of Alexandria, to find water in the Desert, between Suez and Cairo. This is not only an important discovery for the natives of the country, but will also prodigiously facilitate the intercourse with India by steam.

'The first experiments were made in the valley of Kesche, where the workmen bored, in one instance, to the depth of one hundred and sixty feet, through a fine sandstone, mixed with clay, without finding any humidity ; and in another place to the depth of fifty feet, principally through a rock composed of fragments of silex and jasper, where they met with a hard rock which broke the instruments, and the attempt was consequently relinquished on that spot. The operations were transferred to the valley of Candelli. Here water has been found in a clayey stratum, at the depth of only thirteen feet, where a well is already established, to which the Arabs come for their daily supply.